



In 1995, activities in the Division of Epidemiology dealing with HIV infection and AIDS, formerly spread among three branches in the Division, were combined into one branch and named the AIDS Program. Mr. Jamie Rittenhouse, formerly of Coalition for the Homeless, was appointed as director. Already, the staff responsible for surveillance, prevention, and services projects are working together as a cohesive unit, and utilizing new work strategies and computer resources to more efficiently accomplish their goals. More specific information about the Program can be found on the following pages.

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An Overview of the Kentucky HIV/AIDS Program

HIV/AIDS SURVEILLANCE PROJECT

Program description:

The HIV/AIDS Surveillance Project is charged with acquiring, recording and reporting both HIV and AIDS cases diagnosed in Kentucky, as required by 902 KAR 2:020 for Reportable Diseases. Reports are received from hospitals, outpatient clinics, health departments, clinical laboratories and private physicians. AIDS cases are reported by name, while HIV cases are reported only by initials. Utilizing software provided by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, these reports are compiled into a statewide database. The HIV/AIDS Surveillance Project also creates and distributes statistical reports on HIV and AIDS incidence to over 600 recipients. This Project is staffed by a Surveillance Technician and Project Coordinator in Frankfort, and a Nurse Surveillance Consultant responsible for the KIPDA (Jefferson County) region.

The data that Surveillance collects influence both prevention efforts and service provision. Timely, accurate reporting allows our Community Planning Groups to identify groups at highest risk for HIV infection and target prevention intervention strategies. Our services programs rely on the numbers of AIDS cases when applying for Ryan White Care Act funding, as these numbers determine our funding allocation.

There have been no breaches in confidentiality during the history of this project. Several security precautions are employed, both for the computer and physical files.

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HIV/AIDS Surveillance Project:

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An overview of HIV/AIDS Branch programs (continued from page 1)**HIV COUNSELING AND TESTING****Program description:**

The *Omnibus AIDS Act* enacted by the 1990 General Assembly (KRS 214.625) mandates that all 120 Kentucky counties offer HIV antibody testing free of charge through local health departments. There are other organizations, such as substance abuse treatment facilities, that also provide counseling and testing services. Some counties also provide these services to inmates of local jails or prisons. The counseling and testing services are provided free of charge and are usually by appointment. Persons are given the choice of being tested anonymously or confidentially. All counselors must complete a two-day Counseling, Testing and Partner Notification Training. Staff assigned to this program are also responsible for the confidential notification of exposed sexual and needle-sharing partners of persons infected with HIV.

Pregnant women utilizing Public Health Centers are now being encouraged to consider HIV antibody testing, as those who are identified as infected can take advantage of AZT treatment to reduce the chance of perinatal transmission.

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HIV PREVENTION AND EDUCATION**Program description:****Continuing Professional Education Program:**

This Program employs two full-time individuals to review and approve/reject HIV courses proposing to meet the education criteria specified in KRS 214.610 and KRS 214.615. The courses must contain information on the basic medical and epidemiological facts of HIV/AIDS, modes of transmission, preventive measures, universal precautions and OSHA standards, medical treatment, community resources, legal aspects, ethical guidelines, and proper attitudes and behaviors towards persons with HIV. Lists of approved courses are distributed to the public as requested, and reports are made to the Interim Joint Committee on Health and Welfare based on Licensure Board Reports as to compliance with the law. We also assist Licensing and Regulation in determining materials suitable for distribution to certain health-care facility patients.

HIV Prevention Program:

The HIV Prevention Program changed dramatically from 1994-95 due to the implementation of the HIV Prevention Community Planning Process. Community Planning Groups (CPG's) were formed in three Kentucky regions: Eastern, Western, and North Central regions. The CPG's are composed of members of local health department staff; community-based organizations; specialists in the fields of social and psychological services, epidemiology, and education; and members of high-risk populations (men who have sex with men, gay men of color, African-Americans, injecting drug users, youth at risk and women at risk). This mix of both professionals and representatives of the communities to whom prevention efforts will be targeted helps to ensure project effectiveness.

The CPG's conducted needs assessments of existing HIV prevention efforts, analyzed current and projected epidemiological data, and created intervention strategies to reduce the risk of HIV transmission for at-risk populations. These interventions include empowerment workshops, focus groups, several one-on-one outreach strategies for specific populations, and condom distribution. Prevention Specialists for Men Who Have Sex With Men, African-Americans, and Youth at Risk have been hired by each region to coordinate activities for those target audiences. Each region also has a CPG Coordinator to provide administrative support for the CPG. The process is administered statewide by a Statewide CPG Coordinator, who is assisted by a statewide MSM Initiatives Coordinator, a statewide Minority Initiatives Coordinator, a Policy Analyst and an Epidemiologist.

Health departments across the state provide on-site Health Care Worker Education in sites which include hospitals, nursing homes, in-patient drug treatment facilities, and out-patient facilities. Some health departments employ HIV/AIDS education specialists who provide outreach interventions to high-risk populations and the general public. Through the Targeted HIV Prevention Program, several local health departments also work with the CPG's, and receive special grants to reach persons at highest risk for HIV transmission.

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HIV SERVICES

Program description:

Kentucky administers five programs that provide HIV-related services: the Kentucky HIV Care Coordinator Program; the Kentucky AIDS Drug Assistance Program; the Kentucky HIV Health Insurance Assistance Program; the Kentucky Home and Community-Based Care Program; and the Kentucky HIV Care Consortia Program.

The HIV Care Coordinator Program is a statewide case management network formed specifically to provide information, advocacy, support, counseling, and referral services to HIV-infected individuals. The Program employs twelve case managers based in six state regions to link HIV+ clients with all of the health and human services for which they are eligible. Clients must be HIV+ to participate in the Program, but it is free of charge to all regardless of income level. The Care Coordinators also provide access to the state and federally funded programs listed below.

The Kentucky AIDS Drug Assistance Program (KADAP) assists low-income HIV+ individuals who have no other medication payment source in purchasing up to sixteen HIV-related medications. The Kentucky HIV Health Insurance Assistance Program pays insurance premiums for qualifying individuals who are at risk of losing existing coverage due to inability to work but who do not yet qualify for other assistance. The Kentucky Home- and Community-Based Care Program provides assistance with primary care services, home health services, mental health and substance abuse treatment, CD4 count testing, benefits advocacy, and other approved services, depending on that region's needs. Finally, the Kentucky HIV Care Consortia Program funds gaps in support services such as housing, utilities and nutrition. Eligibility for participation in these programs is based on Kentucky residency, medical status, and income, adjusted for family size.

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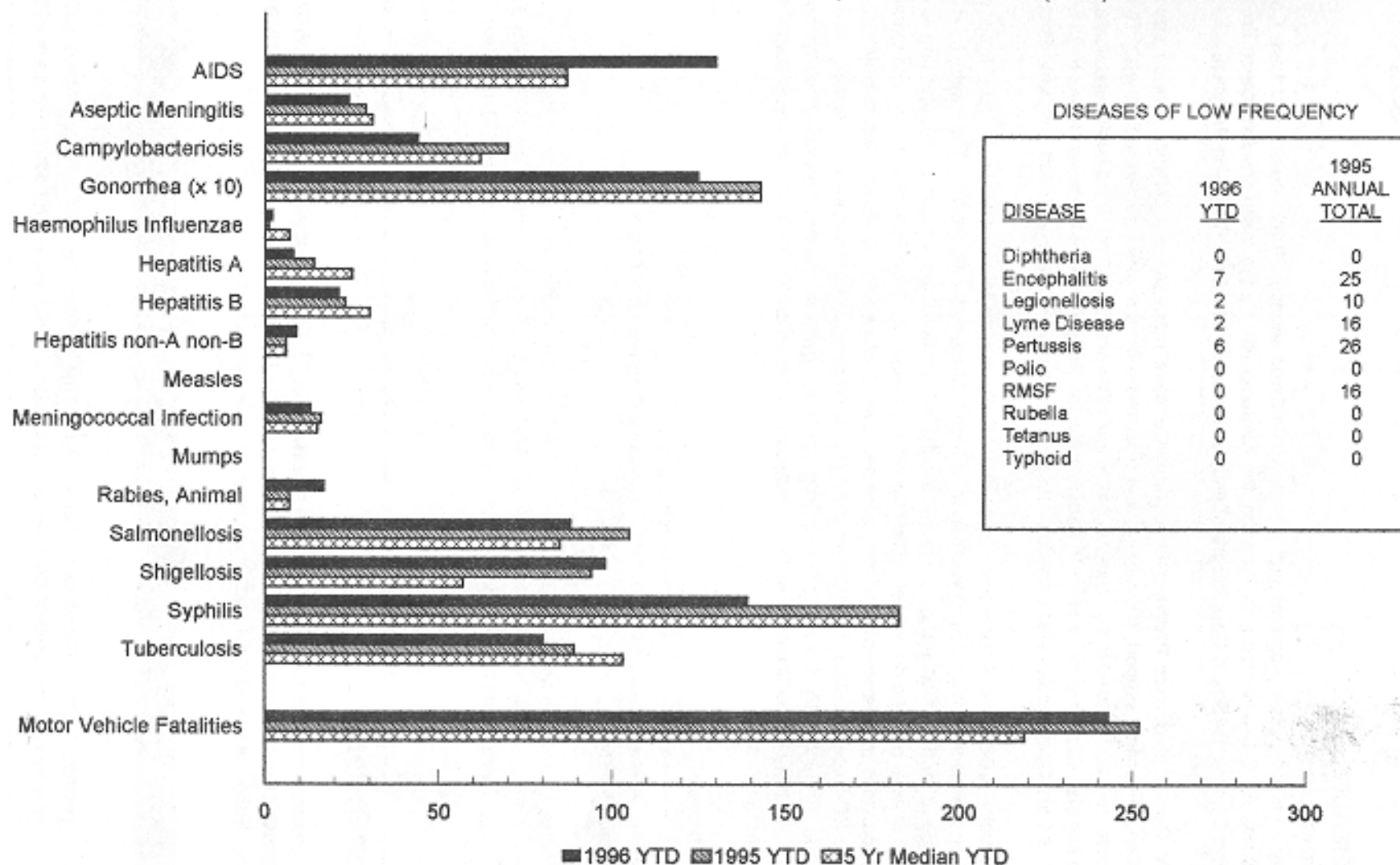
For additional information about Kentucky's HIV/AIDS Program you may contact Jamie Rittenhouse, Program Director, or Brenda Kelley, Administrative Secretary at (502) 564-6539 or by writing the HIV/AIDS Branch, Division of Epidemiology, Department for Health Services, Cabinet for Health Services, 275 East Main Street, Frankfort, Kentucky 40621-0001.

Reminder

We welcome comments from our readers of articles for "Epi Notes". If you have information about disease incidence or occurrence or other interesting health data that needs to be shared, please call or write Joyce Bothe, Editor, at the address and phone number shown on page 6.

Errata: In the table on page 2 of the April issue of *Kentucky Epidemiologic Notes & Reports*, the number of cases of *Chlamydia trachomatis* in 1995 should be 6904 instead of 6704.

CASES OF SELECTED REPORTABLE DISEASES IN KENTUCKY, YEAR TO DATE (YTD) THROUGH APRIL 1996



Disease numbers reflect only those cases which meet the surveillance definition.

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**Cumulative AIDS Cases by Area Development District
Kentucky, April 30, 1996**

